

Frequently Asked Questions

Q How can I get an application package to become a WIC-authorized grocer?

A You must submit a written request which includes your name, telephone number, and a complete mailing address. You may either mail or fax this request to:

**Department of Health Services
WIC Program/New Vendor Applications
3901 Lennane Drive
Sacramento, CA 95834**

Fax: (916) 928-0608

Q What do I need to submit to the WIC Branch in addition to my application package?

A You must submit a copy of your:

- business license and
- health permit for the store location for which you are applying and
- either:
 - a copy of your Sellers Permit or
 - a signed and dated lease agreement for the store location for which you are applying.
- documentation appropriate to your type of ownership:
 - Corporation – A copy of the Endorsed Articles of Incorporation and a Statement of Officers that has been filed with the California Secretary of State. Please note that a corporation must be considered an “active” corporation by the California Secretary of State
 - Limited Liability Company – Articles of Organization that has been filed with the California Secretary of State, the dissolution date if applicable, a copy of the operating agreement, and the names of the managers and members
 - A limited partnership shall provide a copy of the Certificate of Limited Partnership that has been filed with the California Secretary of State and a copy of the current partnership agreement, indicating the cessation date of the partnership, if applicable
 - A general partnership shall provide a copy of any documents filed with the California Secretary of State, if applicable, and a copy of the current partnership agreement, indicating the cessation date of the partnership, if applicable

Q When I complete my application package, may I fax it to the WIC program?

A No. The WIC Branch must receive original application documents via mail.

Q Do I need a current health permit before I submit my application package?

A Yes. The grocer must have and maintain a current health permit to sell food items under the California Uniform Retail Food Facilities Law (CURFFL), Health and Safety Code Section 113920, before authorization and during the entire agreement period.

Q Do I need a business license?

A Yes. A copy of the valid business license for the store for which you are applying is required.

Q How long does the application process take?

A It could take up to 90 days from the date that the WIC office receives a complete application package from the grocer.

Q What is a “complete” application package?

A An application package is considered “complete” when it is reviewed and determined by the WIC Branch to be completed fully and correctly, and that all required application materials have been submitted with the application and are correct.

Q Do I have to have a store and a store name before I submit my application package?

A Yes. When you submit an application package you must have a store and a store name.

Q Does the WIC program require stores to have a minimum square footage?

A No. The WIC program does not have any square footage requirements.

Q How do I get my customers?

A A store, once it is authorized, will be entered into a statewide database. When WIC participants go to the clinic to receive their food instruments, they will select a store where they choose to shop with their food instruments from this database.

Q How do I get reimbursed for the food instruments?

A Food instruments are redeemed by depositing them directly into your store bank account, like you would deposit regular checks.

Q What types of foods are authorized on WIC?

A The types of food groups authorized on WIC are: milk, eggs, cheese, cereal, juice, peanut butter, beans/peas/lentils, infant cereal, infant formula, tuna and carrots.

Q Do I have to carry all authorized food types?

A Yes. You must carry every type of food group authorized on WIC; however, you do not have to carry every single authorized food item. You should carry a variety of foods in each food group.

Q How can I find out which specific food items are authorized on WIC?

A Specific authorized food items are listed in the WIC Allowed Food List (WAFL) and the Shopping Guide. Both of these documents are available for viewing on this website.

Q How much do I charge for the foods that are approved for WIC?

A Maintain prices for supplemental foods that are reasonable and comparable to the prices of other stores of similar size and type in the same area.

Q How much inventory do I have to have before my on-site review?

A You must maintain on hand the minimum inventory of supplemental foods in each food category that would support the number of WIC participants you expect in your store in a 30-day period.

Q What is a Vendor Agreement?

A A Vendor Agreement is a contract between the State WIC program and the grocer. This contract is a time-limited agreement and explains in detail the rights and responsibilities of both parties.

Q When do I take grocer training?

A Grocer training will be scheduled after the WIC program reviews your application package and has determined that it is complete and all initial requirements are met.

Q How will I be notified about the training class?

A The WIC program will notify you by letter informing you of the date, time and location of the class.

Q I've worked for another grocer that took WIC food instruments and I know about the WIC program. Do I still have to go to training?

A Yes. In order to be considered for authorization, all applicant grocers must attend an interactive grocer education class.

Q What is an on-site visit?

A As required by federal regulations, a representative of the WIC program will visit your store and conduct an on-site inspection prior to authorization to ensure that the store meets all requirements. The state representative will note WIC food prices and shelf inventory on a grocer food price survey form. They will also review and note the store's Seller's Permit, Food Stamp Program, Alcohol and Beverage Control, and Federal Tax Identification numbers and review the store's health permit and business license.